

Summary of Meeting

Interagency Arctic Research Policy Committee

April 27, 2007

10 a.m. – 12 noon

Room 1235

**National Science Foundation
4201 Wilson Boulevard
Arlington, VA 22230**

Present:

Guests:

Arctic Research Commission

Mead Treadwell

John Farrell

Kathy Farrow

University of Alaska

Craig Dorman

Buck Sharpton

Martha Stewart

North Slope Science Initiative

John Payne

IARPC Members and Staff (Principal designated with asterisk*):

Agriculture

Gale Buchanan*

Louis Tupas

U.S. Coast Guard

Thad Allen (Admiral)*

Brian Salerno (Rear Admiral)

Jon Berkson

Rajiv Khandpur

Defense

William Rees*

John Stubstad

Energy

Jerry Elwood*

Wanda Ferrell

Environmental Protection Agency

George Gray*

Greg Susanke

Interior

Mark Myers*

Jim Devine

John Haugh

National Aeronautics and Space Administration

Michael Freilich*

Seelye Martin

National Endowment for the Humanities

Bruce Cole*

Helen Aguera

Ralph Canevali

Malcolm Richardson

Carole Watson

National Institutes of Health

David Abrams*

Marya Levintova

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Rick Spinrad*

John Calder

Kathy Crane

National Science Foundation

Arden Bement, IARPC Chairman*

Karl Erb

Mike Van Woert

Fae Korsmo

Simon Stephenson

Martin Jeffries

Office of Management and Budget

Joel Parriott*

Office of Science and Technology Policy

John Marburger*

Mark Vincent

Dan Walker

Smithsonian Institution

Hans Sues*

Igor Krupnik

State

David Balton*

Julie Gourley

Transportation (Maritime Administration)

Elizabeth Megginson*

Regina Farr

The Interagency Arctic Research Policy Committee (IARPC) convened on Friday, April 27, 2007, with Dr. Arden Bement, Chairman, presiding. In accordance with the Arctic Research and Policy Act (Public Law 101-609, as amended), this meeting was open to the public.

Dr. Bement noted that since the last IARPC meeting held in 2005 the U.S. had joined many other countries in launching the International Polar Year (IPY), and a primary purpose of the present meeting would be to plan the U.S. contribution to the IPY legacy in Arctic research.

Agenda Item 1: Arctic Research Commission Goals and Objectives

Following introductions, the IARPC heard a presentation from Mr. Mead Treadwell, Chairman of the Arctic Research Commission. Mr. Treadwell summarized the priorities and focus areas of the Arctic Research Commission. Priorities include reinvigorating IARPC, revising IARPC's Arctic Research Plan based on the Arctic Research Commission's input, and building new Arctic research infrastructure. The five foci of the Commission are Environmental Change of the Arctic and Bering Seas; Arctic Human Health; Civil Infrastructure; Natural Resource Assessment and Earth Science; and Indigenous Identities, Languages, and Cultures.

Dr. Bement thanked Mr. Treadwell and invited discussion. Dr. Marburger, Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy, noted that interest in the Arctic was increasing among other interagency groups such as the Interagency Committee on Ocean Science and Resource Management Integration. Accordingly, the Principals charged the Staff with coordination among other interagency committees and working groups to map

Commission foci onto ongoing activities under the National Science and Technology Council and other interagency bodies.

Agenda Item 2: Arctic Observing Network

Dr. Martin Jeffries, Office of Polar Programs, National Science Foundation, summarized the progress that had been made in developing an Arctic Observing Network (AON). Interest in developing AON arose out of the Study of Environmental Arctic Change (SEARCH), an IARPC research program to observe, understand, and respond to the dramatic changes occurring in the Arctic. Dr. Jeffries outlined plans to enhance both interagency and international collaborations, and the Principals expressed a strong interest in these collaborations. NOAA and NSF agreed to co-chair the AON effort in IARPC, and the Principals unanimously agreed to charge the Staff with the continued development of the Arctic Observing Network as part of SEARCH implementation and as a U.S. contribution to the IPY legacy. The full text of the charge follows:

The next biennial revision of the 5-year Arctic Research Plan is due in FY 2007. At the last Principals meeting in 2005, the Study of Environmental Arctic Change (SEARCH) was presented as an interagency IPY activity. As part of SEARCH implementation and a U.S. contribution to the IPY legacy, the Principals of the Interagency Arctic Research Policy Committee charge the Committee staff with the development of the Arctic Observing Network. This activity should be the primary focus of the next biennial revision of the Arctic Research Plan. In developing the Arctic Observing Network, the staff should coordinate with other interagency groups, such as the U.S. Group on Earth Observations, the U.S. Climate Change Science Program's Observation Interagency Working Group, and the Interagency Committee on Ocean Science and Resource Management Integration. The staff should also reach out to local-State-Federal partnerships involved in Arctic research. Staff should prepare a draft for Principals' review by September 1, 2007.

Agenda Item 3: Documenting Endangered Languages, Extending the Partnership

This agenda item consisted of three linked presentations. Dr. Bruce Cole, Chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities, described the Documenting Endangered Languages (DEL) partnership with the National Science Foundation and gave several examples of DEL projects involving northern languages, including the digitization of one thousand Yup'ik audio recordings for storage at the Arctic Region Supercomputing Center at the University of Alaska. Dr. David Lightfoot, Assistant Director for Social, Economic, and Behavioral Sciences at the National Science Foundation, went on to describe the features of endangered languages and noted that the need for documentation is only going to increase as languages disappear. Dr. Igor Krupnik, Smithsonian Institution, presented some suggestions on how to "build a bigger tent" for interagency collaborations on indigenous languages and cultures.

The Principals unanimously agreed to encourage Staff to continue to coordinate research and education efforts in the area of Arctic indigenous languages and cultures. Programs such as Documenting Endangered Languages and similar activities should continue to be coordinated across the relevant agencies. Staff should prepare a status report on common goals and objectives in the area of indigenous languages and cultures by September 1, 2007.

Agenda Item 4: Consultation with Local-State-Federal Partnerships

Drs. John Payne (by telephone) and John Haugh, both of the Bureau of Land Management, introduced the North Slope Science Initiative (NSSI). As Acting Director of NSSI, Dr. Payne described the primary goal of the initiative as enhancing the quality and quantity of the scientific information available for aquatic, terrestrial and marine environments of the North Slope and to make this information widely available. Mr. Treadwell noted that the NSSI, the North Pacific Research Board, and the Prince William Sound Oil Spill Recovery Institute are examples of significant entities with which IARPC can consult and collaborate.

Before adjourning, Dr. Bement thanked all participants and suggested the next meeting be held in November 2007.

The meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

Fae L. Korsmo
Director, IARPC Staff
National Science Foundation